

BEAT THE HEAT

Summer is in full swing and that means higher temperatures and increased humidity. Beat the Heat by taking a few simple steps to avoid heat-related illnesses.

Who is at highest risk?

Anyone can suffer from heat-related illnesses, but those at greater risk include:



Infants and children up to age 4



People 65 years of age and older



People who are overweight



Those who have heart disease or high blood pressure



People who overexert during work or exercise



People who have a mental illness

What are HEAT RELATED illnesses?

Heat-related illnesses occur when **the body is unable to properly cool itself**. The body normally cools itself by sweating, but sometimes sweating is not enough. Having poor circulation or being dehydrated also limits the body's ability to control body temperature.

HEAT CRAMPS

Heat cramps are **muscle pains or spasms** - usually in the arms, legs, or abdomen. Sweating depletes the body's salt and moisture. If you have heart disease or are on a low-sodium diet, get medical attention for heat cramps.

What to do

- Stop all activity and sit quietly in a cool place
- Drink water, clear juice or a sports beverage
- Seek medical attention for heat cramps if they do not subside in 1 hour

HEAT EXHAUSTION

Heat exhaustion can develop after **several days of exposure to high temperatures and not enough or unbalanced replacement of fluids**. People at greater risk include the elderly, people with high blood pressure, and people working or exercising in a hot environment.

Warning signs:

- Heavy sweating
- Muscle cramps
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fainting
- Cool and moist skin
- Fast and weak pulse
- Fast and shallow breathing

What to do

- Find an air-conditioned environment and rest
- Take a cool shower or bath
- Drink cool, nonalcoholic beverages

HEAT STROKE

Heat stroke occurs when the body temperature rises quickly, sweating does not occur, and the **body is unable to cool down on its own**. Body temperature may rise to 106°F or higher within 10-15 minutes.

Warning signs:

- Very high temperature (>103°)
- Red, hot, dry skin
- Fast, strong pulse
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Unconsciousness
- Throbbing headache

What to do

- Move person into the shade or an air-conditioned room
- Bring the person's temperature down using any method available - ice packs, cool water in a tub or shower; cool water from a garden hose; or wrap the person in cool, wet sheets
- **Do not** give person any fluids to drink
- Perform CPR if needed

Any of these signs may be a **life-threatening emergency**. Get medical care immediately or call 9-1-1 while you begin cooling the person down.

REMEMBER

During the heat of the summer, check on neighbors, family, or friends who are at increased risk for heat-related illnesses, and those who live alone.